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SUBJECT: DAILY SUMMARY OF JAPANESE PRESS 08/10/07

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ARTICLES:

(1) A message from General Secretary Kim Jong Il against the backdrop of the US' conciliatory line: "I want to be the US' partner"; China, alarmed by US taking lead, moving closer to Japan

(part one of two)

SANKEI (Top play) (Full)
August 10, 2007

According to what a Chinese strategic-related source (Chugoku senryaku-kankei suji) in Beijing told the Sankei Shimbun, North Korea's General Secretary Kim Jong Il, following the testing of a nuclear weapon last October, sent a message to US President Bush in which the message was transmitted: "With the normalization of relations between the Democratic Peoples Republic of Korea (DPRK) and the United States, we will become a closer partner to the United States than South Korea is." The same source acknowledged that this became the opportunity for the US to change its stance toward the DPRK, and expressed strong alarm about such a development in US-DPRK relations. China, in response, decided to build a strategic mutually beneficial relationship with Japan, according to the source.

The informed source who revealed this information is a high-ranking individual who can access classified material. It appears that there is a high level of reliability in the information not only on the interpretation of the intentions of both the DPRK and the US as well as on the message itself. The information explains not only why there has been recent cooperation between the US and North Korea but also why China now has a policy of moving closer to Japan. There is a possibility of these developments having a delicate influence on future six-party talks and the situation on the Korean Peninsula, as well as on Japan-US relations.

According to the source, the message was transmitted from the DPRK side late last October just after the nuclear-weapons test at the time when six-party talks, including Assistant Secretary Hill and Vice Foreign Minister Kim Gye-kwan, were being held in Beijing. The

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US changed to a dialogue line toward the DPRK starting with the six-party talks last December, and the two delegates this January met each other in Berlin. As a result, the issue of the DPRK's frozen accounts at the Banco Delta Asia (BDA) in Macao headed toward resolution, and this led into an agreement at the February six-party talks for "steps in an initial phase" premised on eventual denuclearization.

There have been frequent dialogues, with the DPRK delegate Kim visiting the US in March, and the US delegate Hill visiting Pyongyang in June. In July, IAEA inspectors began their work, and it was decided at the six-party talks to provide the DPRK with a fair amount of aid, 950,000 tons of heavy fuel oil.

The US has abandoned its principle of not negotiating singly with North Korea as a "terrorist-sponsoring state" and not compromising on the BDA issue. The informed source noted that the springboard for that change was the message from Kim Jong Il. The source said that the Berlin talks, which began an important turning point, occurred at the initiative of the US, and that all expenses for the North Korea delegate, such as the air fare, was picked up by the US side.

In addition, this June, Hill, at a press conference, proposed a four-party meeting of the US, China, the ROK and North Korea, excepting Russia and Japan, to discuss a permanent peace settlement of the Korean War. The background of this was South Korea's concurrence with the agreement by the US and North Korea.

The same source stressed that China was opposed to the four-party proposal. The reason, the source said, was "it would turn into three (the US, ROK and DPRK) against one (China)." According to another informed source, when Hill visited Pyongyang in June, he announced: 1) The US had no intention of toppling the Kim Jong Il regime; 2) the US would like to build friendly ties between the US and the DPRK; and 3) the US would like to sign a peace treaty. Upon hearing this briefing from Hill, the Chinese side added this request: 1) China would like a high level of transparency in the US-DPRK relationship; and 2) the signing of a peace treaty should not damage the interests of a third countries - those countries reportedly including Japan. According to the Chinese strategic-related source, China's senior party and military officials are alarmed. The source

said: "North Korea is asking the US to guarantee the regime's continued existence and to be its national security authority. The US is about to make North Korea its Israel (strategic stronghold)." Reportedly, the normalization of US-DPRK relations originally was analyzed as helping speed up the unification of North and South under the US lead.

The same source pointed out that such a situation would destroy the strategic balance in East Asia. So it was viewed as indispensable for China and Japan to form a strategic mutually beneficial relationship in order to stabilize peace in the region. It appears that Japan is being placed in a difficult position, sandwiched in between the US and China.

(2) A message from General Secretary Kim Jong Il against the backdrop of the US' conciliatory line: "I want to be the US' partner"; China, alarmed by the US taking lead, moving closer to Japan (part two of two)

SANKEI (Top play) (Full)
August 10, 2007

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"If this is true then it is a shock bigger than the Nixon Shock."

Upon hearing the information from the Chinese source, a Japanese diplomatic official expressed his surprise by referencing former President Nixon's 1971 trip to China, of which Japan had no prior knowledge.

This newspaper obtained this information on August 7. The information is highly classified and has not been confirmed, but it explains why after Hill and Kim, the six-party representatives of the US and the DPRK, respectively, had direct meetings in Beijing at the end of last October, the US has pursued a conciliatory line towards North Korea, irritating the Japanese government.

A meeting between North Korea and the US in mid January 2007 in Berlin provided a breakthrough for the stalled six-party talks. During this meeting, the US worked toward resolving the issue of the DPRK's frozen accounts, and control over the six-party talks shifted from China, the host country, to the US and North Korea.

According to the Chinese strategic-related source, Chinese leaders view the normalizing of relations between the DPRK and the US as inevitable. They are extremely wary of the possibility that the US and the DPRK will become strategic partners and take the initiative in reuniting North and South Korea. The planned meeting between the heads of North and South Korea, announced on August 8, fits into this picture.

The Chinese source said that the impetus for the change in relations between the DPRK and the US was a message sent by General Secretary Kim Jong Il to President Bush. A Beijing diplomatic official said that while the information had not yet been confirmed, "with falling popularity ratings as a result of Iraq, the Bush administration probably felt that this was its chance to leave a mark on history by resolving the nuclear dilemma and reuniting the Korean peninsula."

The Chinese strategic-related source sees US Secretary of State Rice and Assistant Secretary Hill as being the architects of the US strategy of becoming friendly with North Korea. Within the US Department of State, those who support a hard-line stance towards North Korea have been phased out over the past year, paving the way for a shift towards a new conciliatory stance.

The big dilemma for China is that its efforts to encourage US-DPRK relations and support of normalizing relations between the two countries in order to achieve a peaceful resolution to the nuclear issue have had certain negative results. Access to North Korea was a powerful diplomatic card for China, but now that card is falling into the hands of the US.

After North Korea's nuclear tests last October, China approved a UN Security Council sanction against North Korea and refused to act as

a point of transfer by receiving funds from a Macao bank when the US was trying to resolve the issue of the frozen bank accounts. Even before that, relations between China and the DPRK were not as friendly as they seemed on the surface, but after the nuclear test, relations between the two countries cooled considerably.

When State Council Member Jiaxuan Tang visited North Korea in mid October of last year to urge a halt to further tests and a return to six-party talks, General Secretary Kim Jong Il told him of President

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Kim Il Sung's "Last Words" but expressed a strong desire to talk with the US.

Kim Il Sung's "Last Words" are made up of three points: 1) the denuclearization of the Korean peninsula 2) normalizing relations with the US and 3) the reunification of North and South Korea. General Secretary Kim Jong Il included these points in his message to President Bush but also emphasized that "(North Korea) will become a close partner of the US."

There are doubts about whether North Korea will really become a strategic partner of the US, as China fears. This may be another tactic to manipulate the great powers, just as North Korea did before with China and the USSR, extracting material support and managing to maintain the existing regime.

However China has rapidly increased the size of its military and economy, becoming a major world player. Amidst China's strengthening ties with Russia, the Korean peninsula is of high strategic value for the US. On the flip side, China also values the peninsula, and this is why the Chinese official expressed an almost excessive amount of wariness.

In the future, China will unmistakably seek to strength ties with Japan. There are many who question the future of Japan-US relations amidst tension over the comfort women issue, the state-of-the-art F-22 fighter, and the North Korea abduction issue.

(3) Editorial: How does the rest of the world view DPJ's Ozawa?

NIHON KEIZAI (Page 2) (Abridged)
August 10, 2007

It was just like Ichiro Ozawa, president of the major opposition Democratic Party of Japan whose party won the recent Upper House election and who is now riding on the crest of a wave. We mean the way he met recently with the United States Ambassador to Japan Thomas Schieffer. The ambassador called on Ozawa and asked for his understanding about an extension of the Antiterrorism Special Measures Law. Schieffer tried to persuade Ozawa with logic, but Ozawa responded somewhat emotionally to him with his United Nations-oriented policy. Every scene of the meeting was unprecedentedly open to the media.

Given that the DPJ until now has been opposed the law, it would have been unnatural if the party had turned around soon after the first meeting between its president and the ambassador. It was also not surprising and understandable that Ozawa was not convinced by the ambassador.

We welcomed that the meeting was made open to the media. Although Ozawa may not have made all past meetings of this kind open to the media, we hope he will continue to open them to the public in the future, as well.

If he treated the session this time with Schieffer as a special case and did not open other sessions of this kind to the public, the US side would naturally deem him as impolite in a diplomatic sense. If that happens, we wonder how other countries' governments that have sent their envoys to Japan think of him.

In the session, Schieffer mentioned the United Nations Security

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Council (UNSC) Resolution No. 1746 adopted in March, and as he mentioned, the war on terror in Afghanistan, unlike the Iraq war, has been clearly endorsed by an UNSC resolution. This is common sense in the international community. Ozawa's position is a minority in the international community.

Pakistan is among the countries to receive refueling service from the Maritime Self-Defense Force (MSDF) in the Indian Ocean. If Japan put an end to its refueling services, Pakistan would be forced to suspend its patrolling in the Indian Ocean. The Islamic nation, Pakistan's participation in the war on terror has helped prevent the war from turning into the war between the Islamic world and the rest of the world. Japan's refueling operations in this sense has been significant.

We deem it is necessary for Japan to continue to be engaged in refueling operations in the Indian Ocean, but if the DPJ insisted on opposing the extension of the antiterrorism law, we think the governing coalition should secure time to override the Upper House's rejection of a bill extending the law by two-thirds of votes in the Lower House. Otherwise, public opinion reflected in the second chamber of the Diet will prevail over that in the first chamber.

(4) Editorial: Antiterror law-Political wrangling must not hurt national interests

SANKEI (Page 2) (Full)
August 9, 2007

The Diet is expected to focus on the Antiterrorism Special Measures Law in its extraordinary session to be called this fall. Ichiro Ozawa, president of the leading opposition Democratic Party of Japan (DPJ or Minshuto), met with US Ambassador to Japan Schieffer. In the meeting, Ozawa clarified his intention to oppose a legislative measure that is intended to extend the antiterror law.

The ambassador also indicated that the United States is ready to provide classified information about the war on terror, thus encouraging the DPJ to cooperate in extending the antiterror law. However, the opposition leader did not respond.

Ozawa-as is evident from what he has been saying and doing on this issue-is apparently aiming to drive Prime Minister Abe and his cabinet into a tight corner in the area of foreign and security policies, using his party's majority in the House of Councillors as leverage.

Japan, as a member of the international community, has made it clear that Japan will never cave in to the war on terror. Letting the anti-terror law to expire would mean that Japan has broken away from the international community. Ozawa says his party is a responsible political party aiming to take over the reins of government. If that is the case, Ozawa should then consider how to ensure Japan's national interests are protected.

Ozawa has been saying he is against the legislation to extend the antiterror law. He insists that it is because President Bush launched the war on Afghanistan as a US war for self-defense. In addition, Ozawa also claimed that relations with the United States for Japan are more than just ratifying the Bush administration's policies toward Afghanistan or Iraq.

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However, the international community's war on terror is based on a resolution adopted by the United Nations Security Council in the wake of the Sept. 11, 2001, attacks on the United States.

Multinational forces are conducting interdictions in the Indian Ocean to block terrorists. This is also a part of the war on terror. Their naval fleets are tasked there with blocking the sea traffic of weaponry and ammunition as well as contrabands like drugs as funding sources for terrorists. Japan's Maritime Self-Defense Force is refueling their vessels under the antiterror law.

The antiterror campaign in the Indian Ocean is under way with the participation of naval forces from a total of eight countries, including the United States, Britain, France, Germany, and the Islamic state of Pakistan. The MSDF's continued activities there are highly appreciated by these countries.

On land in Afghanistan are troops from more than 40 countries. They are engaged in sweeping up terrorists and working to maintain the nation's security. Their military command has now been transferred from US forces to the North Atlantic Treaty Organization.

In Afghanistan, the International Security Assistance Force, or ISAF for short, is now operating under the command of NATO. One of ISAF's mainstay members is Canada, which has sent 2,500 troops to Afghanistan. Canadian forces there have lost 66 lives. This is the largest number of casualties among ISAF's members other than the UNSC's permanent members. Even so, Canada stays on.

In the international community, Japan is called to act in concert with its members. Some people say Japan is kowtowing to the United States. Such criticism fails to strike home.

(5) Opposition-controlled Upper House: Lawmakers must conduct fruitful debate on Japan-US alliance

NIKKEI (Page 1) (Abridged)
August 10, 2007

By Hiroyuki Akita, Nikkei senior writer

A military strategist connected with the Pentagon's long-term strategy planning is attentively watching the future of Japan following the July House of Councillors election.

He said:

"If the country's birthrate continues to decline combined with a rapidly aging population, Japan would inevitably face obstacles in many areas, such as the economy, national defense, and international contribution. How will Japan deal with China, which is aiming to grow into a superpower?"

He is paying particularly close attention to how China's rise might affect the dynamics of Asia. He also indicated that the most important variable was whether Japan would deal with a "powerful China" through the Japan-US alliance or opt for a different path.

Major powers are not watching Japan's post-election situation merely as its domestic affair. They are paying attention to see how it would affect peace and stability in Asia.

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A Chinese security official noted: "Sooner or later, the United States would have to reduce its military involvement in Asia. We are watching how Japan would move when the time comes."

The Upper House election is not necessarily an election to determine Japan's foreign and security policy course. The ruling and opposition parties must not forget that major countries, such as the United States and China, are keeping close tabs on the diplomatic debate in Japan following the Liberal Democratic Party's crushing defeat in the recent Upper House election with the aim of forecasting the country's future course.

Needless to say, the first test would be the question of extending the Antiterrorism Special Measures Law, slated to expire on November 11. The government's failure to extend the law would result in the withdrawal of the Maritime Self-Defense Force, which has been on the refueling mission in the Indian Ocean for naval vessels of the United States, Britain, and other countries that are engaged in mop-up operations against terrorists.

Democratic Party of Japan President Ichiro Ozawa has reiterated his opposition to the law's extension, making a clear distinction with Prime Minister Shinzo Abe. The two leaders must keep in mind that

the success or failure of the law's extension would determine not only the extent to which Japan would go along with the United States but also the future course of the Japan-US alliance.

The former Koizumi cabinet was oriented toward a US-UK-type alliance. Britain has pursued its national interests by sharing information and strategy and taking concerted action with the United States despite some difference in views. Although Japan's relationship with the United States is nowhere near the "special relationship" between the United States and Britain, Japan sent SDF troops to Iraq and the Indian Ocean in the hope of bringing the Japan-US alliance closer to the US-UK alliance.

If Ozawa continues his move to scrap the antiterrorism law, it would end up dragging Japan away from the United States, halting the trend since the Koizumi administration. In Ozawa's term, that would be replacing the Japan-US alliance with the United Nations' seal of approval as Japan's behavioral baseline.

As a matter of course, the US-UK alliance has both advantages and disadvantages.

A British diplomatic official explained:

"Britain has benefited from its solid alliance with the United States in so many ways. At the same time, because Britain does not openly lash out at the United States, it has a risk of being criticized as 'blindly following the United States.'"

Achieving what Ozawa calls "UN-centered diplomacy" seems difficult. As was exposed through the Iraq war, there is a limit to the ability of the United Nations, the international body representing diversified national interests.

If Ozawa is serious about achieving a Japan-US relationship based on equality and a UN-centered diplomacy, he must realize that would require Japan to be able to defend its national interests independently, even when it is exposed to a serious threat. Japan would be pressed not only to enhance its diplomatic capability but

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also to fundamentally review its defense system, as well.

There was concern in Washington that a meeting between Ozawa and US Ambassador to Japan Thomas Schieffer would be counterproductive. Despite that, the US envoy met Ozawa on August 8 with the aim of feeling out the opposition leader's view on the Japan-US alliance, in addition to asking for his support for the law's extension.

The international environment surrounding Japan is hazy. China is rising and the future course of Russia led by President Putin remains murky. The situation on the Korean Peninsula is becoming complex, as seen in Seoul and Pyongyang's plan to hold a second South-North Korea summit.

What type of bilateral alliance is most desirable for defending Japan's national interests? Lawmakers must conduct fruitful debate without being engulfed in a political battle.

(6) Era of Diet with opposition holding majority in Upper House
(Part 2): Interview with Hirohisa Fujii, former DPJ deputy president; Party employs no uncanny scheme

TOKYO SHIMBUN (Page 2) (Full)
August 10, 2007

Hirohisa Fujii: Fujii, since he left the LDP, has acted together with Ichiro Ozawa. Some people say Ozawa is a shrewd man, and others say he is the prince of disorder. But Fujii defends Ozawa, saying: "Such reputations stems from his stance of pursuing his own ideals." He criticizes the lawmakers who departed from Ozawa and joined the Liberal Democratic Party (LDP), saying: "They were attracted by the ruling party's advantageous position and gave up their ideals." After graduating from the University of Tokyo Law Faculty, he joined the Finance Ministry. After serving as a secretary to the chief cabinet secretary and other key posts, he ran as a candidate

supported by the LDP in the House of Councillors election in 1977 and was elected for the first time. Later, he was elected to the House of Representatives six times. Fujii served as finance minister in the Hosokawa and Hata cabinets, secretary general of Jiyuto (Liberal Party), and secretary general of the Democratic Party of Japan. He is 75 years old.

-- Prime Minister Abe decided to stay in power despite many LDP members having called for his resignation.

His staying on is based on a considerably aggressive judgment, and the public have not positively accepted it. The method the prime minister has employed is high-handed. Former cabinets took the way of holding thorough discussion and then voting (on bills on the Diet agenda), based on the view that voting is necessary under the rule of democracy. But Prime Minister Abe repeatedly forced a vote on a bill before its faults could be exposed through debate. He is holding onto power probably because he is strong-armed and has a narrow field of vision about public views.

-- The Diet has entered an age of the opposition camp holding a majority in the Upper House.

The DPJ is now a ruling party in the Upper House. We must be a responsible party.

-- What Diet strategy has the party envisioned in preparation for

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grabbing political power?

We will submit a number of bills (to realize the DPJ's policy measures) in the Upper House. We will also ask government agencies to produce records and exercise the full range of administrative investigation rights to call witnesses to the Diet. We remained unable to conduct investigations that the LDP did not approve of, but we will carry out investigations into overseas operations by Self-Defense Force (SDF) troops, as well as into the pension mess. The demonstration of the DPJ's ability to hold the reins of government will lead to its victory in the next Lower House election.

-- The DPJ won a victory in the Upper House election in 1998. At that time, the opposition party took a moderate policy stance, saying, "We will not use financial issues to force the government to dissolve the Lower House for a snap election." As a result, the party was unable to seize political power.

We are not allowed to repeat the same mistake. Mr. Ozawa, Jiyuto president at that time, has also the same feeling. If we are unsuccessful this time, we will miss the last chance to grab political power. It is undesirable to take the stance of opposing whatever the government and the ruling camp submit, but when we have to have a showdown with them, we must do so.

-- The focus of discussion in the extraordinary Diet session in the fall will be on whether to extend the Antiterrorism Special Measures Law authorizing the Maritime Self-Defense to engage in refueling operations in the Indian Ocean.

(The DPJ) has so far opposed the extension of the law. We will take the same stance in the upcoming session. The situation has changed from that of six years ago, when (the fight against terrorism) was launched based on the United States' individual self-defense right. The focus is now on the issue of security in Afghanistan.

-- Mr. Ozawa rejected US Ambassador Thomas Schieffer's request to extend the Antiterrorism Law. Won't the tough stance toward the US work negatively to your effort to pursue political power?

The US is a big-hearted country. Our opposition to the law probably will evoke criticism from the press secretary and other officials in the Bush administration. But some Americans have different views from their's.

-- Views are sometimes split in the DPJ over the party's response to

the Antiterrorism Law, diplomatic and security policies, as well as constitutional revision.

We have told junior members to stop their antagonism while taking into account the some 20 million ballots cast for us in the Upper House proportional representation segment. We will hammer out a policy platform by the time of the next Lower House election in preparation for our party seizing power. We will refer to issues related to the Constitution and national security in the platform. If the platform specifies that Japan should abide by the principle of international cooperation and participate in US peace operations and that Japan will be allowed to use its self-defense right in a restrictive way, there will be no conflict of opinion.

-- Do you think Mr. Ozawa, in a drive to grab political power, will

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launch a move to reorganize the political world?

We employ no uncanny scheme. Mr. Ozawa has accepted everyone who comes to him and has let them go away from him if they want. It should be the rule of right for a party to aim to seize political power in the next Lower House election by playing up the ability to take over the reins of government, instead of reorganizing the political world.

-- It is unlikely for the Lower House, in which the ruling coalition holds an overwhelming majority, to be dissolved at an early date, isn't it?

That might be true from a commonsense viewpoint. In such a case, we will walk the high road in a calm manner. While making efforts to submit legislation drafted by House members and increasing local assembly members, we will do our best to have the voters understand the DPJ's policies.

SCHIEFFER